

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
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18 May 1954

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2003

SUBJECT: Thoughts and Possible Courses of Action concerning latest Developments in PBSUCCESS -- Arrival of the ALPHELM.

1. Because of the continued delay in our receipt of intelligence messages from Guatemala City and other stations in the SUCCESS circuit, I requested General Cabell yesterday and [ ] this morning to assist in straightening this out to the end that at least headquarters will get equal precedence with Lincoln on the receipt of these and other vital communications. (Our cable of Sunday afternoon to Lincoln apparently did not work, since there was a long delay in our receipt Monday afternoon of a critical intelligence message from Guatemala City. This resulted in our being empty-handed when the Secretary of State called for assistance and confirmation in connection with the statement he was proposing to make.
2. It is important that we press to conclusion the matters under consideration in connection with [ ] including the question (and timing) of [ ]'s return and the ways and means best suited to putting into effect the substantive proposals contained in my dispatch of last Friday to Lincoln. We have not yet heard from Lincoln as regards the substantive aspects of this matter. The only thing which we have in is yesterday's message urging the retention of [ ] at headquarters for an additional period of 30 days. [ ] is pulling hard to be allowed to return to [ ] to assist in working out the proposals involving the relief of the situation of JUVIA and JUVIA I and also the sweetening up of ERRATIC. Failing our willingness to let him go back he has asked to be allowed to enter the hospital at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, leaving headquarters sometime Thursday. I have assured him we will try to have something worked out prior to that time -- with Lincoln.
3. I have asked Mr. [ ] to get in touch direct with Mr. Barnes concerning yesterday's cable from Lincoln requesting tdy assignment of a headquarters person who can help out with the air crews matter. Mr. [ ] has reached Mr. Barnes on the telephone this morning.
4. Concerning the information said to have been provided by crew members about two additional shipments from Stettin, I have asked Mr. [ ] to get in touch with his contacts at ONI the first thing this

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morning in order to repeat, reconfirm and clarify the information and requests which we passed to the ONI duty officer last night at about 2 o'clock. On the basis of what we were told by the ONI man last night it seems doubtful that ONI has any very strong capabilities of ascertaining information about the other two ships without better leads than we are able to provide -- and it was indicated that they may have to go through their London office to Lloyds for help in identifying any vessel or vessels loading at Stettin. I also asked Mr. [ ] to obtain a full and clear statement from ONI as to Naval capabilities for maintaining aerial reconnaissance of vessels entering and passing through the Caribbean area. (Whereas we were assured in the case of the WULFSBROOK that aerial reconnaissance was being conducted, our first (and only) information concerning her arrival in the Caribbean area came via Europe in the form of information concerning the vessel's itinerary. Aerial reconnaissance played no part.

5. I have asked Mr. [ ] this morning to take all of the information which we and State have received concerning the two other ships over to NSA to see what they can do to help us with the identification of the vessels. The NSA researchers may be able to do something on the basis of the admittedly slight information we have up to the present moment.

6. The State Department (Mr. Leddy) has assured me that they will continue to keep pressure on London to ascertain the subsequent ports of call of the vessel (if any) so that we may lay on further interrogations of the crew and hopefully the skipper of the ALFHELM. They (Mr. Holland) are also continuing pressure on the British to get the ship ordered out of Puerto Barrios prior to the completion of offloading.

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7. Consideration of other possibilities -- PW leaflets, etc. of disrupting the offloading -- threats to stevedores, rumors about a time bomb in the ship, sensitive ammunition in cargo etc.

8. A message should be sent to Ambassador Peurifoy in reply to his personal message to me of last night requesting that the State Department publicity release be held off. I think we should give him some of the reasoning here and point out that the Department was determined to release the publicity and that the real question was whether the sabotage attempt would be called off. It was our feeling at the time that the sabotage should continue irrespective of the release and that one of the rationalizations was as follows: If there is in fact in being within Guatemala a significant resistance organization opposed to the government, then some sabotage of this Iron Curtain Communist origin arms shipment could be expected in the wake of an announcement of its arrival at Puerto Barrios. The other side of this coin (Liddy and I] is that the Guatemalan army may develop strong resentment against the persons responsible for the attempted sabotage of ammunition coming to them. It was even suggested that we give consideration to having Lincoln broadcast that the sabotage had been done by underground Communists who were opposed to seeing the arms get into the hands of the army. AWD felt that this was probably oversubtle but he did not rule it out entirely as a confusion element or device.

*paramilitary  
to show*

9. One matter requiring very close consideration by us and by Lincoln is whether we are not beginning to slide into, or back into, a ~~military phase~~ <sup>phase</sup> at a premature time. Lincoln's latest instructions covering rail sabotage efforts call for a rather substantial paramilitary effort. This effort once it is started will be without the benefit of surprise and without the benefit of a spontaneous general uprising. At the moment and under present conditions, it is the Guatemalans and not CALLIGERIS who have the mostest. Query also whether ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ by engaging in all this paramilitary sabotage type of activity at this time we will not tend to arouse and even consolidate the Guatemalan military to such an extent as to have a seriously adverse bearing upon the chances of success in SUCCESS.

10. Labour party - given to I - ]

*What should Sherrill  
be saying -*

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